

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, October 20th, 2024
Rev. Gerry Gallant

Godly Patience
Proper 24
James 5: 7-11

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

God promises us justice,
and teaches us persistence.

God promises us compassion,
and teaches us not to lose heart.

God promises to be with us
and teaches us to tend to each other.

So let us worship our God of comfort and challenge,
We will offer prayers and praise to our God of hope and healing.

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit,
you breathe life into all things and nourish your whole creation.
You are a rock and refuge for your people,
for you are trustworthy in all things.
Your desire for peace with justice can never be defeated.
You alone can bring life out of death,
and restore wholeness to broken lives,
so we praise you and rejoice in the hope you offer.
For your love is the power at work in every situation,
seeking goodness and revealing truth,
a love that will never let us go.
In our time of worship, we offer you our love and loyalty
through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Children's Hymn

Call to Confession

Prepare the way of the Lord!
Let us make our confession to God.

Prayer of Confession

**God of our hopes and our hearts,
You provide the gift of faith but we lose heart quickly.
Troubles weaken our trust and
disappointments eat away at our commitment.
Forgive us and create in us clean hearts and in
your love, give us peace and perseverance.**

Assurance of Pardon

Remember the promise that Paul declares:
What will separate us from the love of Christ? Hardship? Distress? Peril or sword?
No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through the God who loves us.
Neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come
can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.
Let us rejoice that, no matter what is happening around us,
no matter what we have done,
God's deep love will never let us go.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn #313: "Oh Worship The King" (V 1,2,5)

Oh worship the King, all glorious above;
oh gratefully sing God's power and God's love,
our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
pavilioned in splendour and girded with praise.

Oh tell of God's might, oh sing of God's grace,
whose robe is the light, whose canopy space;
whose chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
and dark is God's path on the wings of the storm.

O measureless Might, unchangeable Love,
while angels delight to hymn thee above,

thy ransomed creation, in glory ablaze,
in true adoration shall sing to thy praise.

Responsive Reading

Psalm 119:41-48

⁴¹ Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord,
your salvation according to your promise;

⁴² **then shall I have an answer for him who taunts me,
for I trust in your word.**

⁴³ And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth,
for my hope is in your rules.

⁴⁴ **I will keep your law continually,
forever and ever,**

⁴⁵ and I shall walk in a wide place,
for I have sought your precepts.

⁴⁶ **I will also speak of your testimonies before kings
and shall not be put to shame,**

⁴⁷ for I find my delight in your commandments,
which I love.

⁴⁸ **I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love,
and I will meditate on your statutes.**

Anthem (Music Ministry): "Who Will Go For Me?"

Prayer for illumination
(Congregant Prepared)

Scripture

James 5:7-11

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹ Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

¹¹ Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Sermon

In the Scripture we looked at last week James told us that the wicked, the greedy, the worldly will receive their just judgement when their time comes. It was a dire warning to Christians to not fall into the ways of the world. To not live their life pooling up their resources in a reservoir for themselves, but instead to be a river of blessing into the world, sharing the blessings that God has given them into the lives of others, both Christians and non-Christians.

In the Scripture we are looking at this week he is continuing on that theme. However, this time he is speaking very clearly to the faithful. He tells us, **⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers.** He is clearly speaking to the faithful, telling them that they need to be patient until the coming of the Lord.

But what does James mean by being patient? Being patient is a challenge in our world. We live in a world that is filled with instant everything, instant food, on-demand television, google search so you can find out things in a fraction of a second, compared to the hours we used to spend in research.

We have gotten so used to getting everything quickly that even a short wait causes us to lose our patience. You hit a red light on your trip, and you begin to get impatient, you have to stand in a line for more than a minute, you get impatient, you are put on hold, and you get impatient, your food at a restaurant takes more than a few minutes and you get impatient.

So, what does James mean when he tells us to be patient? The word that is translated as patience in versus 7-10 is a combination of two Greek words, 'macros' which means long, large, or big and 'thumos' which is the word from which we get the word thermometer, and it means temper. So, patience as it is translated in versus 7-10 of the scripture means having a long temper, or long suffering. It means that we have self-control and self-restraint in the face of insult, in the face of injury, in the face of persecution. It means that we have the ability to suffer a long time under the mistreatment of others with growing resentful or bitter.

This is the same patience that is described in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 13: 4-7

⁴ Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

This is the same patience that is described as one of the Fruits of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

James is telling us to live with Godly patience. This means we will suffer for a long time, and we need to be kind. Usually when we are suffering, we are anything but kind, but James is reminding us that as Christians we need to be set apart, to be different in how we respond to this world. So, we need to be long-suffering and kind, but for how long?

Until the coming of the Lord. We can endure suffering for a short time, maybe even a longer time, but James is saying that we need to do it until the Lord comes again. That means you need to live a life of Godly patience until the events described in the book of Revelation take place, or until you pass from this world, whichever comes first.

So how do we do it? How do we live with Godly patience in a world which is so impatient? James has a few suggestions for us.

James 5:7-10

⁷ Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸ You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹ Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰ As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Be patient like a farmer. If you have ever tried to keep a garden you know that gardening is a challenge, being a farmer takes that challenge to the next level. The farmer is patient, working in his fields, through the early and late rains. This means that he has to wait through spring rains and fall rains, it is not just a few weeks, it is the majority of the year, and throughout all of that time they are at work dealing with all of the work involved in farming, dealing with the weather, animals and insects and which are seeking to destroy all their work in the fields.

So why do farmers farm? Why do they suffer so long in their labor? James tells us it is for the precious fruit of the earth. They wait because the harvest is a process. They wait because you cannot harvest your crop until it has time to mature. The fruit is precious, but not instantaneous.

We need to understand that God has planted the seed of His Word in the soil of our hearts. And like the field of the farmers, it takes time for that precious fruit to grow in

each of us. Just like the farmer needs to tend his field through the seasons, we need to understand that God is tending our hearts through the seasons of our life, nurturing us through our times of prosperity and our times of trial and tribulation, through our good and bad, God is tending the fields, so that the precious fruit of our Salvation matures until the day of the Lord's return. God's focus is not on the fruit available that day, but the eternal harvest in his kingdom. God allows all of the things that happen in our lives to happen because the harvest of precious fruit is his Goal.

James is saying we need to establish our hearts, to muster our courage, to strengthen our resolve, to be steadfast in our faith, until the day of the Lord. He says that the Lord is at the door, right there and ready to take us at any time.

So, he tells us stop grumbling or complaining or sighing about the trouble we face in this world. He is saying do not blame your troubles in this world on one another. Be long suffering and know that the fruit of the Lord is being worked in you. God allows hardships in our life so that we can grow in our faith, someone once put it this way, 'The soul would have no rainbow if the eyes had no tears.' So, like the farmer we need to be at work in the field, knowing that we will be working through season in our life as we await the coming of the Lord at the time of Harvest.

Then James speaks of the prophets. Men who suffered at the hands of the world because of their witness to the world. The message of the farmer is that we are to be at work in this world, the message of the prophet is that we need to be witnessed in this world.

Christians were told in the Great Commission that we are to be at work witnessing in this world. The prophets all suffered at the hand of people of this world because of their faithful witnessing. Daniel was tossed into the lion's den, Isaiah was sawn in half, almost every prophet suffered at the hands of the people because they refused to back down from the truth of God's Word.

Anyone who speaks in the name of the Lord and boldly proclaims the truth without compromise will be persecuted in this world. The world naturally opposes the truth of the Lord's Word.

Look at Jeremiah, better known as the weeping prophet, a man who wrote the book of Jeremiah and the book of Lamentations. He was the weeping prophet because he preached to Judah in their darkest times, just before they were exiled to Babylon. A time when the majority of people had turned away from worshiping Jehovah faithfully, and instead had stated to sneak the worship of pagan god's into their faith. They were living in step with the world, men doing what was right in their own eyes instead of living according to the Word of the Lord. They were compromising the truth for the sake of a better life here on earth.

And Jeremiah prophesied to them for 40 years. For 40 years he told them the truth, he spoke to them about the danger they were in because of the compromises they had made with the world. For 40 years Jeremiah preached repentance, and not a single person listened to him, not a soul repented and changed their ways, because they did not like what he told them, it went against their will for themselves.

Jeremiah was God's man speaking God's message and he was rejected, he was put in the stockades, he was put into prison, he was lowered into a muddy well and left to die. Yet through all of the suffering he endured he was patient.

One of the beatitudes that the modern church of conformity, the ones who embrace the love of the world likes to skip over is this.

Matthew 5:11-12

¹¹ "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

When the world hates you because you stand true to the Gospel you are in good company, you stand with the prophets.

So, when you are doing God's will and suffering you are in a good place. God's people suffer, even when they are faithful and righteous they will suffer, God never promised us wealth and health, he promised us persecution and suffering at the hands of this world.

It is important that we understand this, because too often people believe that when things go wrong in this world that they have done something wrong, something sinful and that they are out of God's grace.

God knows what we are going through, he knows the challenges we are facing, the persecution we are going through, the suffering we are enduring, and these are the times that he comes to us, he cares for us.

Remember the story of the prophet Elijah, another of the hated prophets. A man who did not want to be a prophet, but answered God's call on his life, he struggled, at one point in his ministry he actually prays to God saying, 'God kill me!' Can you imagine that? He was so overwhelmed that he sought death, rather than continuing on in his work. Do you know what God's response to that prayer was, 'Go take a nap.' There is amazing healing power in naps, the next time you are burned out, before you try anything else try a nap.

When Elijah woke up there was an angel there with him who had been sent by God to bring him a cake. Nap and cake, sounds good to me, especially if it was an Angel food cake. And he was refreshed, he had found his Godly patience again. God cares for his prophets; God cares for his people, and he will always be there when they are in times of need.

It is said that 'The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you.'

The prophets never stopped witnessing, even when they suffered persecution, even when they suffered punishment, even to the point of death, they endured. So, we are called to be hard at work in this world like the farmer and faithful in our witnesses like the prophets. This means we stay true to God's Word and sharing it with others even when we are laughed at, even when we are mocked and ridiculed, whether it is by strangers or friends or even family.

Which brings us to the last example that James gives us in this Scripture. The life of Job. We all know the story of Job and how he patiently endured his suffering by staying faithful to the Lord regardless of what he was going through.

James 5:11

¹¹ Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

This is the ESV translation, The KJV speaks of the 'Patience of Job' a term with which you might be familiar. And it is in Greek a word that is similar to the word patience that we saw in versus 7-10.

In versus 7-10 that long suffering that we are called to endure is with other humans or at the hands of other humans. However, here in verse 11 it means long suffering in whatever life circumstances we find ourselves in at the time.

So, James is saying that we need to have patience, to suffer long suffering with both people and circumstances in this world.

We have all had times where we enjoy the place that we are in, but we cannot stand the people we are with or vice versa, we are with people we love in a place we cannot stand. Or times where we wish everything would just go smoothly, and of course nothing does.

James says we cannot get irritated, impatient, or upset in life. We need to stay put, stand fast and endure the people and the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

James is saying there might be times we want to run and hide, to escape, to flee from the people and circumstances of our life, and in those times, we need patience. We need to endure the trials and tribulations that the world throws at us, because God gives patience, perseverance, and endurance in those circumstances if we stand firm in our faith.

Look at Job! Job was a rich and righteous man, and God was talking about how wonderful Job was and Satan was listening. Satan says it is no wonder that Job serves you God because of everything you do for him, if you let me take away all that you have given him, he will curse you.

That is the theme of the book of Job, not just suffering, but the question if God deserves to be worshiped apart from the blessings, he gives us in this world. God is the one on trial in the book of Job, Satan says that God does not deserve praise and worship, he only gets that because of the blessings he gives his people.

So, in a single day Job loses everything, all of his livestock, all of his children, the only thing he is left with is his wife. A woman who is supposed to be loving, supporting, and encouraging, but instead she is the opposite. Job's wife is a woman filled with impatience. She tells him to give up, curse God and die.

Job lives according to the truth of God's Word. The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. And in the end God restores his health and wealth. Job was not perfect, he had patience and endured long suffering in faith, and for that he was rewarded in his latter days.

Job was blessed by the Lord because of his long suffering, he experiences God's compassion and God's mercies.

So whatever circumstances you find yourself in, know that God is in control.

God is not an idle farmer; he is busy at work in the fields. So, if he is plowing up the soil of your hardened heart, trying to soften it for his purposes do not be upset. If he is weeding out the sins of your life, do not fight him and choke off the fruit of the spirit. If he is putting you through trials and tribulations, understand that he is seeking to produce the greatest harvest possible in you. God is trying to give you the endurance you need, he is trying to make you heart strong, and it is not always a process that we can see and understand when we are living through our circumstances.

Brothers and sisters, we need to live our lives differently than the world. We need to have a focus on the eternal and quite getting caught up in the here and now. James is reminding us to be workers in this world, to be witnesses in this world and that through all of it, to know that our God is with us, because we are precious to Him.

We need to live with the Godly patience of the farmer, the prophets and of Job as we await the second coming of Christ. Doing God's work, sharing God's Word and waiting and trusting that he will come and set all things right as we walk as the Salt and Light of his Word in this dark and broken world.

Let us pray,

Holy Trinity, Keep Us in Your Grace

Almighty and eternal God,
 God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit,
 you have shown your rich grace and mercy to us.
 Eternal Father,
 you created us at the beginning.
 Eternal Son of God,
 for us you became truly human,
 and for our sins you bore the cross.
 Eternal Spirit,
 you proceed from the Father and the Son from eternity,
 and through your holy Gospel you give us faith and holiness.
 O one, eternal and almighty God,
 Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
 keep us in your grace until our life's end
 in the eternal blessedness in the life to come.

Source: Veit Dietrich, d. 1549, Trinity (1)

Hymn: "I Sing Praises"

I sing praises to Your name, O Lord praises to your name, O Lord
 For your name is great and greatly to be praised
 I sing praises to Your name, O Lord praises to your name, O Lord
 For Your name is great and greatly to be praised.

I give glory to Your name, O Lord glory to your name, O Lord
 for your name is great and greatly to be praised.
 I give glory to Your name, O Lord glory to your name, O Lord
 for Your name is great and greatly to be praised.

I give honour to Your name, O Lord honour to your name, O Lord
 For your name is great and greatly to be praised
 I give honour to Your name, O Lord honour to your name O Lord
 For Your name is great and greatly to be praised.

Invitation to Offering**Offering****Offertory Prayer****(Congregant Prepared)****Closing Hymn #321: "Praise to The Lord The Almighty" (V 1,2,4)**

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, who rules all creation!
 My soul, praise God who alone is your health and salvation!
 Come, all who hear, sisters and brothers near,
 joining in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who in all things so wondrously reigning;
 hides you with sheltering wings, ever gently sustaining!
 Have you not seen how your heart's wishes have been granted
 through God's kind ordaining?

Praise to the Lord! And with all that is in me adoring,
 All who have life and breath, come now with glad praises out pouring!
 Let the Amen sound from God's people again;
 now and forever adoring!

Pastoral Prayer

Loving God,
 together we have heard you speak to us,
 welcoming us, forgiving us,
 teaching us, challenging us.
 And we have responded to you
 with praise and confession,
 listening to your Word,
 praying in thanksgiving and intercession,
 and committing ourselves to you anew.
 It has been good to be together.
 As we prepare to leave this place,
 we await your blessing
 so that we may be comforted
 by the assurance that you will
 be with us during the coming week.
 Continue to speak to us as we seek your face.
 Guide us by your Holy Spirit.
 Keep us close to you, we pray,

in every aspect of our daily lives,
that we may seek your honor and glory
wherever we are and in whatever we do.
We pray, anticipating your blessing,
for we pray in the name of Jesus,
our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Benediction

The love of God the Father, the faithful creator,
the peace of Christ, the wounded healer,
the joy of the challenging Spirit,
the hope of the Three in One
surround and encourage you today, tonight, and forever. **Amen.**